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Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7447th meeting
Friday, 22 May 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Ms. Murmokaitė	(Lithuania)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Omaish
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Fernández-Arias Minuesa
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Small arms

Report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2015/289)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Small arms

Report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2015/289)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Albania, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago and Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/333, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Albania, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Malta, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2015/289, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Lithuania.

The draft resolution before colleagues today is the product of months of work by our Permanent Mission, which culminated in week-long intensive negotiations among the 15 members of the Security Council, as well as multiple bilateral exchanges. I thank all those who helped and guided us along the way, and the Council members for their cooperation in producing this far-reaching text. We appreciate the comments and criticisms received, which we view as an important part of the broader debate on small arms and light weapons. Critical thinking and good-faith engagement are in order to be able to advance in our common efforts aimed at reducing and limiting the horrendous human cost of the uncontrolled illegal spread of small arms and light weapons around the world. We value the strong support for the draft resolution that many delegations expressed during the open debate last week (see S/PV.7442), and we appreciate having so many co-sponsors to the draft resolution.

As we submit the draft resolution to the vote, we bear in mind the passionate call from Karamoko Diakité, an arms control activist from West Africa, not to let down the victims of armed conflicts and to adopt the draft resolution. He spoke from the depth of his personal experience and spoke of the personal experiences and suffering of countless others for whom the impact of illicit arms flows on their faiths and hopes, as well as the faiths and hopes of their kin, is not just a matter of wording, but of the very real harm, the crippling injuries and the deaths that they have suffered, which will continue to haunt them as long as they live.

The draft resolution is not ideal, but the world we live in is not ideal either. In the real world, we work painstakingly to achieve the desired results, with perseverance, patience, laborious efforts and compromise, one step at a time, bit by bit, piece by piece, block by block. For all our posturing, the illicit transfer of arms will continue, as arms trade is one of the most lucrative businesses in the world; but we can, and we must, do all within our power to limit the damaging, even mortal effect of such illicit flows on civilian populations.

We have the responsibility to protect as best we can. That is what we sought to do, to build on the excellent Australian resolution adopted in 2013 (resolution 2117 (2013)) by adding new operational impact-oriented elements. Those much-needed bits and pieces were the foundation on which the small arms and light weapons discourse and action can, and, I hope, will continue to

be built in the Council. Let me go through some of the new elements in the text before the Council.

The draft resolution contains important new language on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), that landmark instrument we have so painstakingly and passionately negotiated over an extensive period of time. Had we taken an all-or-nothing approach, we would not have the ATT today, and the world would be worse off because of that.

The draft resolution has a very strong focus on the human costs of the illicit spread of small arms and light weapons and on the need to protect the victims, women, children and other vulnerable groups. It also speaks clearly on the critical role of women in tackling the problem of small arms and light weapons. It requests more specific reporting by the Secretary-General on the impact on specific vulnerable groups, including children, with recommendations for action to be taken to counter the impact of the illicit spread of small arms.

The draft resolution includes extensive new provisions on assistance to affected countries and calls on new entities to identify capacities that could contribute to countering the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. It encourages the United Nations system to act in a more coherent fashion in helping those States, including through assisting weapons collection, enhancing physical security and stockpile management practices; safe and effective management, storage, marking, record-keeping and tracing of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons; as well as the collection and destruction of surplus seized, unmarked or illicitly held weapons and ammunition; and the development of national export and import control systems. It emphasizes the need to strengthen border security, judicial institutions and law enforcement capacity, and calls for examining and facilitating the transfer of technologies that would improve the tracing and detection of illicit transfers in small arms and light weapons, as well as for greater transparency in small arms transfers.

As Boko Haram, Da'esh and their likes burn, kill, enslave and rape with the help of small arms, the draft resolution contains concrete language on the threat of terrorist groups and calls on the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee, its monitoring team, the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate to engage on the threat of weapons in the hands of terrorists and to develop plans of assistance to countries in need. All of these and other new elements could have a tangible impact on tackling the illicit small arms problem, and if implemented, could make a difference to countless people trapped in conflicts.

Let me be very clear: contrary to some allegations, none of these elements in the draft impinge upon or violate State sovereignty. My own country has fought hard and long for sovereignty and would do everything to protect it again and again, and we know very well that all of us around this table and at the United Nations feel strongly about sovereignty as well. The real threat to national sovereignty and all the core rules and norms that govern nations and human lives comes from the action by terrorists, illegal armed groups, militant mercenaries, transborder organized crime, traffickers and smugglers of all stripes, who slaughter, burn, rape and destroy without borders — and definitely not from the language of this draft resolution, which is aimed at seeking greater coherence within the United Nations system in order to better help countries to counter the problem of illicit arms. The draft text clearly stipulates that all measures would be implemented only as appropriate, within existing mandates and as requested by affected countries.

Every minute, as we speak, a life is lost because of the illicit trade or misuse of small arms and light weapons. Besides causing deaths and injuries, such illicit flows facilitate the commission of hideous human rights abuses and atrocities and indirectly impede development and growth. The all-too-free access to small arms strikes at the core of the human rights of women and girls. Every day, whether in war-ravaged villages or in displacement and refugee camps, women in conflict situations are faced with impossible choices that none of us would ever want to make — to let their children starve or to venture out in the streets, camps or fields in search of whatever meager edibles they can find and other necessities, all of this at the risk of being caught in the crossfire, hit by a stray bullet, beaten, robbed or raped at gunpoint.

For many women and girls, even attending to their basic bodily needs on the edge of a camp can be literally a matter of life and death. As members prepare to vote, I ask that they think of the mothers who would live in continuous fear that rebels, terrorists or militant gangs will attack their homes and steal, rape or kidnap their children, or sell into slavery their daughters. Think of the displaced, of religious minorities running for their lives, of the elderly and the disabled who simply cannot

run. Think of the children as young as six or eight, barely able to hold a gun, scared, brainwashed and forced to maim, torture and kill in order to live.

We have heard the heartrending testimonies of former child soldiers in the Council. We cannot be so callous as to ignore them. Think of the humanitarian workers and doctors who risk and lose their own lives in order to help those in need. Think of the journalists who brave the worst crises to keep us informed. Think of the peacekeepers being attacked and shot as they perform a much-needed protection mission. Think of all those human beings — fellow human beings — about to be killed, abused, injured, reduced to slavery, treated like animals in captivity by warlords, terrorists and militant gangs.

This draft resolution has been drafted not to resolve all the underlying disputes on the arms trade, but to make a difference to those desperately in need, to enable specific and concrete actions aimed at limiting the damage and reducing the human costs caused by the illicit spread of small arms and light weapons. The victims cannot defend themselves, but we can. The choice to take the side of the victims is ours to make, and I hope we all do.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Chile, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Angola, Chad, China, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

The President: There were nine votes in favour, none against and six abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2220 (2015).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): Allow me to make this statement on behalf of the three African States members of the Security Council, namely, Angola, Chad and Nigeria. The African group also associates itself with the contents of the present resolution and vote.

Let me begin by acknowledging the efforts deployed by the Lithuanian presidency and by you, Madam President, with a view to reaching consensus on this critical resolution. We note the advancements the resolution provides by focusing on the human cost of small arms. This morning, you, Madam, emphatically referred to that focus, particularly with regard to civilians, women and children; on the devastating impact on development, education and health; and on conflict prevention and avoiding relapse into conflict. We also note the advancement in positioning the United Nations to better support arms embargoes and other international obligations, such as Security Council support for the Arms Trade Treaty.

Although, in our view, this resolution should, above all, contribute to bringing about a lasting solution to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons — namely, to theatres of instability and conflict, including a halt to the supply of those weapons to non-State actors — unfortunately, our proposals and concerns regarding the issue of proliferation and access to small arms and light weapons to non-State actors were not sufficiently considered in the resolution. Together with other members of the Council, we made considerable efforts to address this daunting challenge to the African continent, namely, the indiscriminate supply and illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, which are fuelling the spread of several conflicts in Africa and the world.

Eleven years ago, by adopting resolution 1540 (2004), the Council clearly defined the concept of non-State actors in a particular context. Currently, our main concern relates to non-State actors to whom small arms and light weapons are supplied to fuel conflicts, destabilize countries and promote policies of regime-change, with the tragic consequences we are witnessing today where despicable crimes against humanity are committed.

As a country that has gone through a very painful experience, it would be politically unacceptable not to seize the opportunity that the discussion of this resolution provides to address the problem of the supply of weapons to non-State actors. Our position of non-support of the resolution is based on the assumption that the illicit supply of weapons to non-State actors amounts to a threat to international peace and security,

which the Council must consistently address. Al-Qaida, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab; militias in Libya, Syria and Iraq; insurgents in Mali, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and other countries; and the non-State actors to whom large amounts of weapons have been supplied, which are out of control, are the main promoters of terrorism, instability and armed conflict in many parts of the world.

In the search for a compromise during the negotiation of the resolution, we accepted a definition mentioning non-State actors as terrorists, armed groups and criminal networks. Additionally, we proposed to explicitly mention in the resolution the exemption of armed private contractors and others similarly engaged in carrying out security missions. Unfortunately, all these efforts were to no avail.

Finally, Madam President, we remain engaged with you and other members of the Council with regard to the adoption of a resolution that would deal with the problem of the spread of small arms and light weapons, and would not leave such an important question unresolved for the future.

Mr. Cherif (Chad) (*spoke in French*): Chad endorses the statement made by the representative of Angola on behalf of the African Group, including the African members of the Security Council.

Chad notes with regret that a resolution as important as the one just voted upon by nine members of the Security Council (resolution 2220 (2015)), whose aim, we were told, is to help the most affected regions by the destabilizing impact of small arms and light weapons, more specifically Africa, was adopted without involving the representatives of the continent in th Council. For the African countries in general, and Chad in particular, the major challenge to be taken up in combating the use, that is to say, the abusive and illegal use of small arms and light weapons, remains the issue of the illicit transfer of these arms to non-State actors, including, inter alia, armed groups, terrorists and criminal networks.

The concept of non-State actors has been defined by the Security Council through resolution 1540 (2004) in the context of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Ironically, when it comes to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and their illicit transfer to non-State actors, the reference to these concepts gives rise to great opposition from certain prominent members of the Council. Non-State actors, illegally supplied with arms and munitions, provoke conflicts and destabilize States, commit egregious crimes and human rights violations, sow destruction and plunge civilian populations into desolation, thereby jeopardizing any prospects of development for the States concerned. Therefore, for us in Chad, the refusal to include a provision in this resolution that would make it illegal to transfer small arms and light weapons to non-State actors is tantamount to a refusal to prevent crises and conflicts and tantamount to encouraging destabilizing efforts against fragile States.

Throughout the discussions on the draft text leading up to today's vote, the African delegations showed great flexibility by submitting various proposed amendments with a view to having a balanced consensual text that would accommodate all the concerns of all members of the Council. Unfortunately, these valid concerns, such as expressed by us, did not attract even the slightest attention from those who rejected them with some degree of condescension. We are deeply disappointed and shocked.

Nothing is more frustrating than when it comes to issues as important as those concerning Africa, the African members of the Council are marginalized and the only reason given is that their concerns have no impact on the adoption of the resolution. This historical injustice must be remedied through a reform of the Security Council, such that Africa can take its rightful place in the Council, alongside other continents, and that it can make its voice heard. Given the categorical refusal to take our concerns on board and in the absence of any possibility of dialogue on subjects as sensitive as these, Chad had no choice but to abstain in the voting on this resolution.

Either way, convinced of the justice of our cause and the relevance of our arguments ,we insist on the importance of and need to find a solution to the illicit transfer to small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. We will continue our efforts until we can make our voices heard.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): With regard to resolution 2220 (2015), which the Council has just adopted, Malaysia places high hopes on the Council being able to reach consensus on this important issue. The statement that you made before the voting, Madam President, clearly amplified why this resolution is needed. However, we also recognize that Council members will have to redouble their efforts to further

refine an approach that can take the parameters of this technical issue into consideration. Malaysia was pleased to participate in our constructive discussions, and we would like to congratulate Lithuania and you personally, Madam President, for your leadership in our collective endeavour.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Lithuanian delegation for preparing today's resolution 2220 (2015), on the illicit trade and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons, and to commend your and your colleagues' unflagging efforts, Madam President, to arrive at a text that is both ambitious and pragmatic. We welcome the text's adoption and the fact that it obtained the sponsorship of more than 50 Member States, proof of the international community's support for this vital cause.

France voted in favour of the resolution for several reasons. It reflects an important initiative, first introduced in the Security Council two years ago by Australia, on the threat posed by the trafficking and spread of small arms. For the first time the Council considered this scourge through a cross-cutting approach, leading to our adoption of resolution 2117 (2013), which has been a reference text on the subject ever since.

The new resolution's provisions put civilians and their protection at its core, because, of course, it is civilian populations, particularly women and children, who are the first victims of the proliferation of such weapons. They are responsible for nearly half a million deaths a year and remain by far the world's deadliest. The resolution also highlights the role of the United Nations in implementing the Arms Trade Treaty, which marks a historic step forward and will help to strengthen international peace and security. The ability of the United Nations to act could not be allowed to fall behind. The resolution also addresses the flow of small arms that benefits armed groups, criminal networks and terrorist groups that take advantage of the lack of regulation in the area to continue their barbaric and destabilizing activities all over the world, particularly in Africa.

Lastly, today's resolution is designed to integrate the fight against the illicit trade in small arms into every aspect of United Nations action, for which we had to mobilize not only the sanctions committees and the expert groups responsible for monitoring embargoes but also, when necessary and appropriate, our peacekeeping and special political missions. Of course, the United Nations architecture for combating terrorism also has a role to play. We hope the issue of small-arms trafficking will be systematically taken into account in the analyses of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Monitoring Team of the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011), concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities.

Madam President, during the negotiations you took the time to hear the views of every member of the Council, and I would once again like to pay tribute to you and your team for all your efforts. We would of course have preferred the text to be more ambitious in some respects, such as on the protection of civilians, and in recognizing the achievements of the Arms Trade Treaty. But a resolution is of necessity the result of compromise, and today's is ultimately a demanding one that we are convinced will advance the Organization's ability to fight the deadly scourge of the illicit trade in small arms.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption of today's important resolution 2220 (2015). We thank Lithuania for the leadership and tenacity it has shown on the issue, with efforts that build innovatively on resolution 2117 (2013), which was the Council's first on small arms and light weapons.

Today marks a substantial step forward in the saving of lives from the scourge of small arms and light weapons, and four elements of today's resolution deserve particular attention. The first is its review of the work of the United Nations departments and entities that address the issue of small arms and light weapons. Second is the concrete proposals it makes for increasing those bodies' effectiveness in future. Third is the important recognition in the text of the disproportionate impact that such weapons have on women and children, and fourth is its further acknowledgement of the positive impact of the Arms Trade Treaty. On that point, the United Kingdom maintains that the Treaty is the most effective international tool for creating a responsible and secure international trade in these weapons, and we once again urge all States to support and accede to the Treaty.

Finally, we regret the fact that several Council members found themselves unable to support today's resolution. For decades, global policy on conventional weapons has focused on the obligations and responsible

behaviour of exporting and importing States. That is the best way to moderate illicit transfers and proliferation. Contrary to some arguments, we do not think that ill-defined and practically unenforceable new statements by the Council on the subject of non-State actors can in any way improve the situation on the ground. Despite those disagreements, however, we urge all Member States to focus on the overall value of today's resolution, which offers tangible actions for addressing the scourge of small arms and light weapons across all regions of the world, particularly in Africa.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile voted in favour of today's resolution 2220 (2015) in an expression of my country's ongoing commitment to disarmament in every form and to the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We believe the work of the Security Council can be enriched through an ongoing dialogue on the impact of illicit transfers of such weapons on international security and on the foundation provided by the Arms Trade Treaty of 2013. The resolution we have just adopted marks a step forward from the previous Security Council resolution on the subject, resolution 2117 (2013). The text also contains substantive language on women and peace and security in line with resolution 1325 (2000) and other related resolutions, and with article 7, paragraph 4, of the Arms Trade Treaty, supported by Chile.

We regret the fact that the resolution does not include a reference to the impact produced by illicit transfers in arms and ammunition to non-State actors and unauthorized groups. That issue should be addressed, given the negative effects of the cross-border actions of many non-State actors, which have major repercussions for civilian populations and for international peace and security.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation shares the growing concern about the problem of the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons. We believe that combating it requires a coordinated effort on the part of the international community while at the same time maintaining the central role of the United Nations. However, the Russian Federation abstained in the voting on today's resolution on small arms and light weapons (resolution 2220 (2015)), and we would like to explain our reasons.

We firmly believe that strengthening national controls in this area would enable us to significantly reduce the risk of the uncontrolled proliferation of such weapons. That was why during the work on the text of the resolution we proposed adding a number of concrete measures, including a ban on deliveries of small arms and light weapons to unauthorized entities in recipient States, the strict regulation of brokering activities and a ban on the unauthorized re-export of arms and on the production of pirated weapons manufactured without licences or under expired licences. Our amendments were not included.

The resolution includes a number of questionable provisions relating to the expansion of the power of specialized committees and missions of the United Nations concerning issues of control over transfers of small arms and light weapons. In our view, the primary responsibility for carrying out those functions within national territorial frontiers should lie with the Government concerned.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): New Zealand has supported today's resolution 2220 (2015) in both its concept and its details since Lithuania first proposed it. We see the resolution as important because of the gains it makes in an area too little discussed by the Security Council. We thank Lithuania for taking forward the initiative initially taken by Australia in resolution 2117 (2013).

As the President has enumerated, the resolution operationalizes small arms in many facets of the Council's work and encourages wider adherence to the Arms Trade Treaty, one of the most important arms control treaties adopted in recent years. The resolution will also ensure that small arms have more than a temporary place on the Security Council agenda.

Sadly, over the last week the issue of small arms and light weapons itself has become secondary to a highly politicized debate. We have some sympathy for the position of the three African States that wanted an explicit reference to transfers to non-State actors. New Zealand does not support the illicit transfer of arms to non-State criminal and armed groups. We could have accepted any of the formulations under discussion. We believe that a solution could have been found if delegations on both sides of the debate had focused on the words on the page and had taken a less positional approach to the negotiations. We are pleased nonetheless that the resolution has been adopted with the sponsorship of a wide range of Members of the Organization.

Mr. Suárez Moreno (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela abstained in the voting on resolution 2220 (2015) despite the efforts made by Lithuania in leading the negotiations.

Venezuela participated actively and constructively in the process. We believe that the resolution has some positive but weak elements with respect to establishing clear objectives for lifting arms embargoes and providing for international cooperation, including in the areas of technology transfer, the management and control of stockpiles, marking and tracing, and the collection and destruction of stockpiles. However, we regret that we did not take into account the position of many countries in the discussion on the urgent need to prohibit the transfer of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors, whose definition is clearly established to achieve the purposes set forth in resolution 1540 (2004), as well as the prohibition of the unauthorized re-export or the sale of these weapons without a licence or with an expired licence.

The seriousness of the problem of the illicit trafficking in weapons is reflected in the alarming statistics presented by certain sources, which estimate that at least 875 million of these weapons are available, many of them in the hands of private individuals and non-State actors. It is believed that between 7 and 8 million such weapons are produced each year. Furthermore, legal international sales of such weapons account for at least $8.5 billion annually. In addition, according to the World Bank, the illicit sale of such arms could account for an additional 20 percent of that figure.

Therefore, the resolution that the Council has approved has limited effectiveness because it fails to provide for measures to prevent hundreds of thousands of small arms and light weapons, including heavy machine guns, grenade launchers, ground-to-air missiles and portable air-defence systems, inter alia, continue to stoke conflicts in Africa and the Middle East.

Finally, in future, we would like to see greater openness on the part of those Member States that have opposed measures designed to prevent the illicit transfer of small and light weapons to non-State actors, because this continues to propagate violence in many regions throughout the world.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons exacerbates regional armed conflicts, worsens regional tension, fosters terrorism and transnational organized crime and causes bodily harm and death to innocent civilians. Tackling the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is of great significance for maintaining regional peace and stability and promoting the normal socioeconomic development of the countries concerned.

The Chinese Government has always been firmly opposed to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Security Council should play an active role in further strengthening the efforts of the international community in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In the current situation, more than ever, the international community needs a Security Council resolution that can comprehensively and effectively combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The Chinese delegation took part in consultations on resolution 2220 (2015) in a positive and constructive spirit. During the consultations, some members, in particular the three African members, proposed some important, legitimate and highly valid amendments. The consultations should have further heeded the views of all sides and sought to solve differences so as to reach a text that could enjoy the unanimous support of the whole Council. It is regrettable that the relevant amendments have not been fully reflected in the text. In the light of the situation, China abstained in the voting on resolution 2220 (2015).

Mr. Fernández-Arias Minuesa (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain supported and co-sponsored resolution 2220 (2015) and thanks the delegation of Lithuania for presenting it and for its tireless work leading to the adoption of a timely and positive text. The text is a good complement to resolution 2117 (2013) and keeps the issue on the Security Council's agenda. We view positively the references to the control of arms transfers to terrorist groups and criminal networks, to the protection of civilians and to issues of women and peace and security. We also see as very timely references to the Arms Trade Treaty, which is and has been the most important step taken in disarmament in recent years.

The resolution incorporates practical measures aimed at improving the control of the illicit arms trafficking, management, stockpiling and proper

destruction of stockpiles. We have see the image of the soldier laying down his rifle contained in the tapestry hanging in this Chamber as symbolic of the Security Council's work in the fight to free the world from the threat of weapons, specifically small arms and light weapons. We have taken a step in that direction today.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): We adopt resolution 2220 (2015) today, almost two years after the Security Council adopted the first-ever Security Council resolution on small arms and light weapons (resolution 2117 (2013). It is a pioneering text, and we should all support it. The new elements of the resolution will help mitigate the misuse of these weapons and ultimately advance international peace and security. It will not change the world, but it will help shape our collective approach to the issue, and over time this will make a difference.

The resolution will improve the work of the United Nations to protect refugees, internally displaced persons, and women, children and vulnerable groups from the misuse of small arms and light weapons. It will enhance the international community's monitoring of and compliance with arms embargoes in relation to these weapons. It will improve how disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes take into account the effects of small arms and light weapons and it broadens the focus of the United Nations in making recommendations to address the impact of these weapons, specifically on children in armed conflict.

The resolution encourages the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team to provide recommendations for actions to enhance the response to threats from terrorist access to small arms and light weapons. It encourages the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate to provide plans to facilitate assistance and strengthen Member States' capacities to respond to the illicit trafficking in and the misuse of these weapons, and it makes clear the importance of the Arms Trade Treaty, among other key international instruments.

Yet despite all of the new, positive and helpful provisions in the text, it is troubling that some Council members were unable to support it and risked derailing it for an ulterior political objective. The resolution recognizes

> "the importance of preventing the illicit transfers and sales of weapons and ammunition, including small arms and light weapons, to armed groups and criminal networks that target civilians and civilian objects" (*resolution 2220 (2015), para. 20*).

It also emphasizes that

> "the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons can aid terrorism and illegal armed groups and facilitate increasing levels of transnational organized crime" (*ibid., eighteenth preambular para.*).

Furthermore, in the resolution, the Council reaffirms

> "its decision that States shall eliminate the supply of weapons, including small arms and light weapons, to terrorists" (*ibid., para. 19*).

Despite the clear language and several significant compromises, a few Council members demanded that certain terms be used that have absolutely no precedent in the Council's prior resolutions on small arms and light weapons. We are disappointed that a few Council members would be willing to throw out a resolution that they almost entirely agree with and that they know will make a positive contribution in their own countries in order to cling to one specific term for political purposes, a term that is ill-defined and which no delegation in our negotiations had been able to identify any specific entity that they would wish covered that is not already covered by the language in the text.

A good measure of the global support that the resolution enjoys can be found in the fact that 56 Member States that co-sponsored it. In that context, we are pleased that the resolution was adopted. The United States supports it and looks forward to cooperating with all Member States to implement it.

The President: There are no more speakers on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.